

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MINUTES

April 27, 2005

Chair Knox White called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:45 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL – Roll was called and the following recorded:

Members Present:

John Knox White
Michael Krueger
Robert McFarland

Patianne Parker
Robb Ratto
Eric Schatmeier

Absent:

Jeff Knoth

Staff Present:

Barbara Hawkins – Supervising Civil Engineer, Public Works
Barry Bergman – Program Specialist II, Public Works
Jennifer Ott – Development Manager, Development Services

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Krueger asked that Chair Knox White's comments regarding the Cross Alameda Trail Feasibility Study be amended to state that "Caltrans allows lanes to be less than 12 feet wide on highways." He also requested that the minutes be amended to state that "at times he bikes and drives along Atlantic Avenue..."

Commissioner Parker moved acceptance of the minutes, with the changes as requested. *Commissioner Ratto* seconded the motion. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote – 6.

3. AGENDA CHANGES

None.

4. COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS

None.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS

None.

6. OLD BUSINESS

6A. Recommendations from other City Boards and Commissions on Draft TMP

JKW: The Planning Board asked to have a visioning statement inserted before the first paragraph to define “multimodal” as including autos, transit, bicycles, walking, and needs for people with disabilities.

- Circulation Goal: The Commission on Disability Issues asked to add “barrier free” to the last safe and efficient transportation systems.
- A1.1 concern by the Planning Board that bikes and pedestrians were not specifically included, definition above takes care of that.
 - A-1.4 Add on all streets and in all sections of the City.
 - A-1.5 Housing Commission transit indemnities is an implementation goal covered under the transit plan.
 - A-1.6 Commission on Disability Issues covered in the introduction
 - A-1.8 The EDC had a comment on including smooth cross island flow in the city. Thought it was incorporated in . Did add into this, “without unduly disrupting the quality of life for residents”.
- A1.11 Planning Board was split, some wanted to minimize, others support cul de sacs
- A-2.5 Multi modal cross estuary travel added in “bike, pedestrian shuttles or high occupancy vehicle only crossings” are types of projects we should be looking at.
- A-2.6 included Planning Board’s recommendation
- A-5.3 EDC had suggested to fixed route AC Transit system to enhance mobility for those without access to personal transportation. Prefer the word provide, enhance sounds like it’s an option.
- A6.6 Planning Board suggested in adding this policy. Require monitoring programs to ensure TSM (JKW added “and TDM”) measures mitigate impacts.
- Objective A-7 Add the underlying section of enhancing the viability of non-automotive transportation modes.
- Used Planning Board language
- A-7.4 Planning had a comment on the fact that they felt identifying rights of way doesn’t mean results are not always the way you hope it to come out but need to try.
- B-1.1 PB and Rec and Parks Commission supported. Left as written
- B-2.5 Left as written
- B-3.1 Planning Board supported the language as written, left as written
- B-4.2 CDI Recommendation including people with disabilities.
- B-5.1 The Parks Department indicated the permit program should be designed so that they would not impact on adjacent neighbors and homeowners use their garages for parking instead of storage.
- B-5.2 Included the Planning Board’s recommendation of shared parking in mixed used areas.
- 1.2 Stays the same
- 2.2 did not include disability to better serve pedestrian needs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Not a citywide circulation goal. To be dwelt with on construction projects.
 - C2.5 The Planning Board added in to promote land use that would encourage alternate modes of transportation and enable agencies to procure grant funding.
 - C3 The Planning Board recommended more bike related policies so added two more.
 - C3.2 and C3.3

- C3.4 Bike Lanes on Park Street (Remove Parking)
- C2 Development of Pedestrian Plan
- C3 Development of Bike Plan
- C6.2 Walking, bicycling and automobiles. Add in people with disabilities on this list
- D's No other comments
- After D5 removed, no longer in transportation.

Jon Spangler's comments:

A1.8 Instead of the current wording use; encourage traffic within, to and thru Alameda to use the appropriate streets in the system in providing clear and effective traffic control measures to ensure smooth flow.

A2.3 Increase in Vehicle occupancy levels

A7 Drop the word Modes

B5.2 Chair Knox White used shared parking strategies

C2.4 & C3.1 City of Alameda Plan

C6.2 Pursue strategies thru reduce or eliminate conflicts, increase accessibility, and faster multi model compatibility

Closed Public Comment

Commissioner Ratto's Comments:

A1.4 Do not believe it should be changed

A1.11 Planning Board's comments were concerned with trying to prohibit traffic going thru. Add physical interrupt the grid system, don't think anything wrong with it . Adding on the main island. So just add the work physically.

B4.1 Could incorporate the suggestion from C2.5 by just putting encouraged development patterns and land uses that encourage the use of alternate modes and reduce the rate of growth in regional wide vehicle miles traveled.

B5.1 Neighborhoods chronic problems add something about new developments.

Staff Hawkins recommended the comments from the different boards that appear to be implementation recommendations should be included as an appendix in back. In this way, even if they are not appropriate for the policies portion of the TMP, their comments will still be taken into account and included at a later time.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7A. Review and Comment on the Proposed Civic Center Parking Garage and Oak Street Streetscape Designs

Staff Ott of the Development Services Department reviewed the proposed parking garage project. She stated that the proposed garage would be located on Oak Street between Santa Clara Avenue and Central Avenue. The current design includes six levels and 352 spaces. She noted that the

project would be implemented through a design-build contract, so the internal circulation may change. The exterior design is scheduled to be taken to the Planning Board in June for approval.

Staff Ott described several mitigation measures that were developed to address pedestrian safety at the garage entrance/exit. These include textured paving, a speed bump, lights and sound to be emitted as vehicles exit, and concave mirrors. The sidewalk would be widened by six feet on Oak Street in front of the project to help direct pedestrians away from the building and provide improved visibility for drivers exiting the garage. Six parking spaces total to be removed, and landscaping will be included. She noted that PSBA unanimously approved this design.

Staff Ott noted that eight bicycle lockers (accommodating 16 bicycles) and 24 bicycle racks would be included on the first floor of the garage. Also, there will be lighting in front of the pedestrian-only entrance so pedestrians won't feel drawn to the vehicular entrance.

Staff Ott stated that there was an initial study on parking and traffic impacts, which illustrated that there is going to be an insufficient supply of parking given the anticipated demand associated with the theater project as planned.

The only required traffic mitigations determined to be directly associated with the project are signal timing adjustments, although there are other mitigations for required to reach a "less than significant impact" determination for 2020 as well as for the cumulative impacts of all development, including Alameda Point.

Commissioner Krueger asked if access to the bicycle parking area is to be provided through the vehicular entrance as well as the side entrance. *Staff Ott* indicated that bicyclists would be able to use either entrance.

Chair Knox White noted that in the negative declaration that impacts to pedestrians and bicyclists were not addressed. He asked if they were addressed somewhere else. *Staff Ott* replied that the Community Improvement Commission (CIC) had expressed concerns about these issues, and that these concerns were addressed internally, working with the Public Works Department.

Chair Knox White stated that after accounting for the landscaping, if the sidewalk along Oak Street would actually be narrower after the proposed widening. *Staff Ott* indicated that the sidewalk would be wider than what is currently there.

Commissioner McFarland asked if the intention is to have both bicyclists and pedestrians utilize the widened sidewalk area. *Staff Ott* responded that this was not the intention, but that the removal of the on-street parking should help to enhance safety for bicyclists along the block. She noted that the proposal would not preclude Class II bike lanes along Oak Street in the future.

Commissioner Krueger stated that this assumes that a 10' lane width would be sufficient for motor vehicle traffic. He asked if there are other scenarios that would require wider traffic lanes. *Staff Hawkins* responded that the only reason would be if Oak Street were to be designated a truck route. She noted that if volume were the issue, an additional lane would be necessary, wider lanes would not be helpful.

Chair Knox White Opened Public Comment

Jon Spangler asked what security would be provided for the bicycle parking, and whether this area is covered. He also requested that signage be added at the vehicular entrance to make it clear that bicycles can use this entrance. *Mr. Spangler* stated that the building should be designed so that it may be converted to retail space if needed in the future. He also stated that the Class II bike lanes on Oak Street are important, and indicated that he supported widening Oak Street in the future for safety purposes, but not to add more lanes.

Mr. Spangler expressed his support for the views of Bike Alameda, and stated that the project should be designed to give bicyclists equivalent access to Park Street as motor vehicles. He indicated his support for the removal of diagonal parking on Central Avenue.

Treya Weintraub expressed her support for restoring the bike lane on Central Avenue between Walnut Street and Oak Street and removing the angled parking.

Lucy Gigli, the president of Bike Alameda, asked the Commission to address the project in terms of bicycle safety, noting that with 350 parking spaces that many more vehicles will be present at this location. She stated that improvements at this location are especially important, due to the proximity to Park Street, the main library, and City Hall. Bike Alameda recommends several mitigations:

- *Ms. Gigli* stated that currently bicyclists on Central Avenue are routed onto sidewalk and are redirected into the street in the Park Street district, where there is significant traffic. She recommended restoring the bike lanes on Central Avenue between Walnut Street and Oak Street
- She requested that shared roadway stencils and signs be installed along Oak Street from Lincoln Avenue to Encinal Avenue in place of the potential future bike lanes; this will help to alert both bicyclists and drivers to one another.
- *Ms. Gigli* asked for assurance that bike lanes will not be precluded on Oak Street and that 10' travel lanes will be acceptable
- *Ms. Gigli* requested that these improvements be implemented as part of the garage project.

Andy Cutright stated that one reason he and his family decided to move to Alameda was because of the bike lanes, and that the community and economy will be enhanced by maintaining safe access for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. He stated that bike lanes are preferable to signage only, but that signs are preferable to no bicycle designation.

Cheri Galan stated that she prefers to use her bike rather than a car, and that she feels unsafe when riding with her children on streets without bike lanes. She stated that it is important to have a north-south bicycle facility near Park Street, Grand Avenue is too far away, and that it is important to address issue now, not in planning off in the future.

Rochelle Reed stated that she lives on south end of Oak Street and works on Blanding, that she commutes by bike, but doesn't use Oak Street. She expressed concerns that Oak Street currently feels unsafe to bike, and the parking garage will make it less safe.

Carl Babcock stated that he also lives on Oak Street and tries to ride his bike for local errands, but that it is difficult to get to many shops safely. He requested that the bike lane be restored on Central Avenue and, if possible, create a bike lane on Oak Street.

Public comment closed

Commissioner Schatmeier asked staff if they could respond to the bicyclists' concerns. *Staff Ott* stated that the project would include shared roadway stencils (sharrows) and signs on Oak Street from Encinal Avenue to Lincoln Avenue. She also noted that widening the sidewalk would increase bike safety in front of the garage. She said that the removal of diagonal parking on Central Avenue is not currently included in the project. She anticipates this will be discussed as part of the TMP.

Commissioner Schatmeier noted that the garage will have bicycle parking, and asked if it is appropriate to include project elements to help bicyclists reach the facility safely. *Staff Ott* agreed that safe bicycle access is important, but noted that the project is attempting to meet many objectives with a limited project budget. She stated that the bike lane issues on Central Avenue should not be linked to the garage, and expressed concern that stakeholder groups not in attendance may be opposed to removing the diagonal parking on Central Avenue.

Commissioner McFarland asked if the library or garage would be completed first. *Staff Ott* responded that the garage is scheduled to be completed first.

Commissioner McFarland asked if there was a cost estimate for restriping Central Avenue. *Staff Ott* responded that staff is looking into this.

Commissioner Ratto stated that the funding sources for the project is an important issue, and that to fund funding for striping Central Avenue would require taking money from another element of the project. He said that he and PSBA support restoring parallel parking on Central Avenue, since the 350-space parking garage should meet parking needs. He said that if there are other organizations that oppose removing the diagonal parking, which would bring the General Plan into compliance, they should state their case to Council. *Commissioner Ratto* stated that bicyclists should not be diverted onto the sidewalk on that block. He also stated that he doesn't believe the restriping should be considered as a mitigation for the parking structure, but other funding should be available.

Commissioner Krueger asked how the mitigation measures would be funded. *Staff Ott* responded that only the signal timing adjustments would be funded through the project

Commissioner Krueger asked if it would be possible to find other funding for the signal timing as well as the bike lanes, since they both seem related to the project. *Staff Ott* said they are concerned that the project bid will come in higher than the funding that's available

Commissioner Ratto stated that it is up to the City Council to determine the funding decisions, and that members of the community can bring these issues to the Council.

Commissioner Schatmeier asked where would revenues from the garage go to. He asked if fees could be adjusted to raise funds. *Staff Ott* responded that part of the funding is from a HUD Section 108 loan, which will be repaid in part with meter revenues.

Commissioner Schatmeier asked if the garage would be used for commuters, patrons of businesses, or both. *Staff Ott* indicate that both would be using the facility, and that they are considering monthly permit parking spaces, possibly with smart cards.

Commissioner Parker asked if the garage will be set up to accommodate vanpooling. *Staff Ott* said she would look into that and respond.

Commissioner Parker stated that mitigation is generally done project by project, not on a cumulative basis, and that mitigation needs to be done in context. She stated that the project shouldn't necessarily pay for all mitigations, but funding should be looked at for other related measures.

Chair Knox White noted that the packet says the stenciling will be on Oak Street from Central Avenue to Lincoln Avenue, but that *Staff Ott* had indicated Encinal Avenue in her presentation. *Staff Ott* noted that Bike Alameda prefers Encinal Avenue to Lincoln Avenue, and that may be possible.

Chair Knox White stated that he believes the Central Avenue bike lanes should be considered as a mitigation for the garage project. He noted that other mitigations are as far away as Santa Clara Avenue/Broadway, and that the bike lanes are close enough to the garage that it should be linked.

<p><i>Commissioner Ratto</i> moved approval of the following: 1) Bicyclists and citizens deserve signage and stencils on Oak Street from Encinal Avenue to Lincoln Avenue, 2) the bike lane on Central Avenue between Walnut Street and Oak Street should be restored, 3) the diagonal parking on Central Avenue should be removed, 4) funding be found to implement these mitigations as the project progresses, and 5) signage should be included at the entrance to the parking structure indicating that bicycle parking is available. <i>Commissioner Schatmeier</i> seconded the motion. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote – 6.</p>
--

7B. Recommendations for Countywide Bike Plan

Staff Bergman presented the staff report. He noted that the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency is beginning its bicycle plan update process before the City of Alameda has had the chance to update its plan. Following discussions with CMA staff, project recommendations for the countywide plan were developed with input from the Transportation Commission's Bicycle Plan Subcommittee and members of the public. Recommendations from the full TC will in turn be forwarded to the City Council, which will forward its recommendations to the CMA.

Commissioner Schatmeier moved to recommend the following projects for inclusion in the Alameda Countywide Bicycle Plan:

- 1) Feasibility study and capital costs of estuary crossing from Alameda's west end to Oakland
- 2) Segments of the Bay Trail in Alameda County, including those in the City of Alameda
- 3) The following route through central Alameda: Along Main Street from the Main Street ferry terminal to Pacific Avenue, along Central Avenue from Pacific Avenue to Fernside Boulevard, along Fernside Boulevard to the bike bridge, the bike bridge itself, and along Doolittle Drive from the bike bridge to the city's border with Oakland.
- 4) Along Island Drive from Doolittle Drive to Mecartney Road, along Mecartney Road from Island Drive to the Harbor Bay ferry terminal.

Commissioner Krueger seconded the motion. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote – 6.